

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE NIACT IMMEDIATE 5863

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DEPT PASS ABIDJAN FOR ASST SEC SCHAUFELLE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR AO US CG

SUBJECT: ANGOLA: PRE-OAU CONSULTATIONS WITH MOBUTU

REF: (A) LIBREVILLE 2152: (B) YAOUNDE 4314

1. I CALLED ON PRESIDENT MOBUTU EVNING DEC 31 AS FOLLOW-UP TO ASST SEC SCHAUFELLE'S PROMISE TO KEEP MOBUTU INFORMED OF OUR CURRENT CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS. MOBUTU, WHO WAS SCHEDULED TO LEAVE THE FOLLOWING MORNING FOR BANGUI WHERE HE WOULD BE SEEING AMIN AS WELL AS BOKASSA, SAID HE HAD FOUND SCHAUFELLE'S VISIT USEFUL AND APPRECIATED OUR KEEPING IN CLOSE TOUCH ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONTS.

2. I BRIEFED MOBUTU IN GNERAL TERMS ON POSITIVE RESULTS OF SCHUFELLE'S TALKS WITH BONGO AND AHIDJO, AS WELL AS REPORTS FROM NUMBER OF OTHER POSTS (E.G., RABAT, KIGALI, BANGUI) ALL OF WHICH INDICATED CONTINUED RESOLVE TO WITHHOLD RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA. I NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SOME GOVERNMENTS HAD EXPRESSED ANXIETY REGARDING ADDITIONAL MPLA RECOGNITIONS BEFORE THE OAU MEETING, AND IT WAS THEREFORE IMPORTANT THAT WE CONTINUE VIGOROUS, COORDINATED EFFORTS TO HOLD THE LINE. I ALLUEDED SPECIFICALLY TO INFORMATION WE HAD THAT ETHIOPIA MIGHT BE WEAKENING. MOBUTU SAID HE HAD JUST RECEIVED SAME

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INFORMATION AND WAS TAKING STEPS TO SHORE UP ADDIS'

POSITION. I ALSO SAID WE HAD INDICATIONS THAT SOME LEADERS OF AFRICAN STATES SHARING OUR POSITION MIGHT DECIDE NOT TO PERSONALLY ATTEND THE OAU SUMMIT, AND EXPRESSED OUR VIEW THAT THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE REPRESENTATION FROM THOSE STATES WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF ANY OAU EFFORT. MOBUTU AGREED. HE SAID HE CERTAINLY INTENDED TO BE THERE AND WOULD ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO GO TOO.

3. MOBUTU WENT ON TO SAY THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR FRIENDS WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT ZAIRE'S ADAMANT POSITION ON ANGOLA AND HOW THIS MIGHT AFFECT THE OAU'S DELIBERATIONS. IN ADDIS THE SOVIETS HAD RECENTLY APPROACHED A ZAIRIAN ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAU, KAMANDA, WITH A VIEW TO "EXPLORING" ZAIRE'S POSITION. KAMANDA HAD APPARENTLY TAKEN A FIRM LINE DURING THE CONTACT. MOREOVER, KAMANDA HAD LEARNED OF A SCHEME BEING PROMOTED BY TANZANIAN PRESIDENT NYERERE TO HAVE NETO SHOW UP EARLY IN ADDIS AND BE PROCLAIMED BY MPLA BACKERS AS PRESIDENT OF ALL ANGOLA BEFORE THE OAU MEETING GOT OFF THE GROUND. KAMANDA, WHO HAD RETURNED SECRETLY TO KINSHASA TO REPORT ALL THIS, WILL SHORTLY BE SENT BACK WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO EXPOSE AND COUNTER SOVIET/MPLA MANEUVERS.

4. MOBUTU SHOWED EVEN MORE INTEREST IN AN APPROACH BY THE CUBANS. HE SAID CASTRO HAD JUST SENT A PERSONAL EMISSARY TO BRAZZAVILLE FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF MAKING DIRECT CONTACT WITH ZAIRE TO DISCUSS ANGOLA. MOBUTU SAID THAT, WHILE HE HAD NO IDEA OF WHAT THE CUBANS WOULD COME UP WITH, HE SAW NO REASON NOT TO TALK WITH THEM AND WAS THEREFORE SENDING HIS OWN REPRESENTATIVE ACROSS THE RIVER ON JANUARY 1. I AGREED SUCH A CONTACT COULD POSSIBLY PROVE USEFUL, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN ASSESSING THE OTHER SIDE'S POSITION.

4. AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE SOVIETS' ANXIETY, MOBUTU CITED THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY WERE USING MONEY AND PROMISES OF AID IN TRYING TO BUY MPLA RECOGNITION FROM OTHER AFRICAN STATES. BURUNDI, HE NOTED, WAS AN EXAMPLE. WHEN I MENTIONED AMIN'S RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS TENDING TO CONDONE
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SOVIET/CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA AS NECESSARY TO CHASE THE SOUTH AFRICANS OUT, MOBUTU DISMISSED THIS AS A MEANINGLESS EFFORT BY AMIN TO WRING CONCESSIONS ON MILITARY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE USSR. ALREADY, MOBUTU ASSERTED, AMIN HAD REVERTED TO A MORE EVEN-HANDED LINE IN HIS MOST RECENT STATEMENTS IN BANGU. MOBUTU INDICATED HE ANTICIPATED NO TROUBLE IN KEEPING AMIN IN LINE WHEN THE TWO OF THEM AND BOKASSA GET TOGETHER IN BANGUI

THIS WEEK.

5. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY AS TO WHAT HE THOUGHT MIGHT BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE OAU, MOBUTU MADE CLEAR HE DOES NOT HAVE HIGH HOPES OF THE OAU'S COMING UP WITH AN AGREED FORMULA FOR AN OVER-ALL POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. RATHER, HE SEEMS TO VIEW THE MEETING AS USEFUL TO KEEP THE MPLA IN ITS PLACE AS JUST ONE OF THREE MOVEMENTS WHICH HAS TRIED AND FAILED TO WIN OAU ENDORSEMENT AS ANGOLA'S SOLE GOVERNMENT. MOBUTU REMAINS CONFIDENT THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED, AND IN THIS RESPECT HE SHOWED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN A PROPOSAL HE HAD RECEIVED FROM PRESIDENT SENGHOR THAT ALL NON-MPLA SUPPORTERS CAUCUS IN ADDIS ON THE EVE OF THE SUMMIT MEETING. MOBUTU SAID HE WAS UNCERTAIN JUST WHAT SENGHOR HAD IN MIND (HE WAS OBVIOUSLY FISHING TO SEE WHAT I KNEW) BUT ADDED HE SUPPORTED THE IDEA. IN RESPONSE TO MY OBSERVATION THAT CERTAIN OTHER AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS HAD MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF TAKING ANGOLA TO THE UN IN THE EVENT THE OAU FAILED, MOBUTU SAID HE CONTINUED TO VIEW ANGOLA AS ESSENTIALLY AN AFRICAN PROBLEM BUT WOULD BE NO MEANS RULE OUT THE UN AS A POSSIBLE OPTION.

6. IN CLOSING, MOBUTU REMARKED IT HAD BEEN A TOUGH YEAR. FOLLOWING THIS BANGUI VISIT HE WAS THEREFORE GOING TO REST FOR A WEEK OR SO AT HIS COUNTRY RESIDENCE AND SECLUDE HIMSELF FROM AFFAIRS OF STATE. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT ANGOLA WAS AN EXCEPTION AND WE COULD REACH HIM ON THAT SUBJECT "ANYTIME, DAY OR NIGHT."
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